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ATTACHMENT

17 October 1962

SUBJECT: Critique of Vietnamese Film, "Sons of Hai Ba Trung"
Graphics Register Number R-6726

This 30-minute film was made by the Ministry of Propaganda of the Government of S. Vietnam primarily for the Vietnamese public, but it is of general interest. It is in full color and comes with an English sound track.

Its purpose is to describe the enemy (the Viet Cong) and to show how he is opposed by the Vietnamese military services. No U.S. personnel are visible in the picture. At the beginning the Viet Cong are shown intimidating the rural population through murder, burning villages and houses, and Communist propaganda. The Self-Defence Corps then goes into action defending the farms and villages, while the Civil Defence protects the roads, bridges, etc., against Viet Cong attacks. There are some realistic scenes of the Army Special Forces attacking the enemy through infiltration, night raids, and close combat. The Army is also pictured befriending the local population by helping farmers build their houses, harvest their crops, etc. Many effective shots of the mountains, rice paddies, and jungle illustrate how difficult the terrain is to fight over.

The last half of the film pictures the activity of the regular Armed Forces. The Army is shown in training and on manoeuvres, and it exhibits a variety of equipment, particularly signal corps but also weapons, tanks, and transportation. We see the Navy in operation at sea and on the inland waterways and a landing operation involving an assault on an enemy strong point. The Air Force shows what it can do, but there are no helicopters.

This is a smooth, professional job of picture-taking--well edited and in excellent color.

In view of the importance of South Vietnam today, I believe this film would be of considerable interest and some value to students of counterinsurgency because (1) it gives a good idea of what the Vietnamese people and terrain look like, and (2) it gives a vivid picture of the difficulty of combating the Viet Cong and the means (presented in brief, basic fashion) employed to do it.

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